

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the outstanding Office Action rejections in view of the foregoing amendments and following remarks. Claims 1, 2, 5, 6, 19, 21, 27, 31-34, and 36 have been amended. Claims 20, 28-30, and 35 have been cancelled. Claims 38 and 39 are new.

Claim Objections

Claims 8, 9, 30, 33, 34, and 36 are objected to as being dependent from a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. New claims 38 and 39 contain the allowable subject matter of claims 8 and 9, respectively. Claim 30 has been cancelled. Claim 33 has been amended to independent form, and claim 34 depends from independent claim 33. Claim 36 has been rewritten in independent form. Claims 8, 9, 33, 34, and 36 depend from claims that applicants believe have been made allowable by this amendment, and should therefore be allowed.

Claim Rejections

Claims 2 and 35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112 second paragraph. The phrase "... (herein "said third polymeric material")..." was in parentheses, and it was not clear to the Examiner if the items in the parentheses were being claimed. The text in parentheses has been deleted from claim 2, and claim 35 has been cancelled.

Claims 1-7, 10-28, and 31-32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (b) as being anticipated by Marrocco (U.S. Patent 4,939,203). Claim 28 has been cancelled. Claims 1, 2, 5, 6, 31, 32 have been amended to define a significantly narrowed subject matter that is novel and not obvious over Marrocco. Claims 3 and 4 depend from amended claim 1, and claim 7 depends from amended claim 5. Claims 10-26 are dependent from claims that Applicants believe have been made allowable by the present amendment. Claims 20 and 28 have been cancelled. Claim 27 has been written in independent form, and amended to include the matter of cancelled claims 29 and 30.

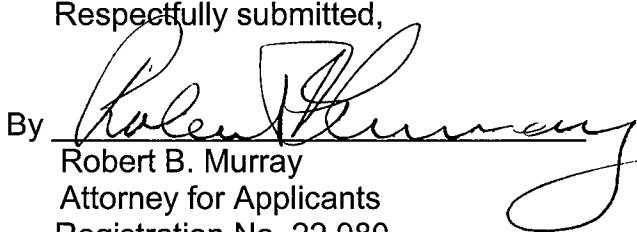
In particular, the claims now include limitations regarding the nature of the first material. The first material is a dialdehyde which has a group, G⁵, separating the aldehyde moieties. Support for G⁵ is found on page 11 of the specification. Group G⁵ is defined to include both an aromatic group and a N-containing heteroaromatic group. Morrocco does not disclose such a material and, therefore, the present claims are clearly novel over Morrocco.

As described in the specification (page 11, line 22), the nature of the first material provides advantages in that the group G⁵ may be arranged to introduce some rigidity into the cross-linking of the second polymeric material. The passage discusses the preference that group G⁵ includes elements to restrict free rotation and/or incorporates bulky groups or atoms and/or other atoms or groups which hinder free rotation due to electronic effects. It is believed that provision of such a first material as described in claim 1, and other independent claims, enhances the

properties of the material which is used to restrict the passage between the first and second locations. It will be appreciated that such material is subjected in use to significant variation in conditions of temperature, viscosity, salinity, acidity, etc. The present invention provides advantages due to having a relatively robust first material.

Claim 29 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Marrocco. Claim 29 has been cancelled, and the subject matter thereof has been combined with claim 30 and added to claim 27.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding Office Action rejections. Early and favorable action is awaited. The Director is authorized to charge any fees or overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2135.

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